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Groundbreaking ceremony for new AFRL toxicology lab

by Tiffany Pitts, ASC Public Affairs

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AFB, Ohio. — The Air Force Research Laboratory Human Effectiveness Directorate broke ground March 18 for a \$14.9 million project to construct a new building to house a tri-service toxicology research consortium. This construction project, known as the toxic hazards effects laboratory, will provide a location for the Air Force, Army and Navy to conduct toxicology research at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

"The construction of the toxic hazards effects laboratory facility is a tremendous opportunity to spur our biotechnology initiative," said James Brinkley, Director of the Human Effectiveness Directorate. "This initiative, which has been planned by our directorate in partnership with several other Air Force Research Laboratory directorates, will capitalize on the strong science foundation that has been established by the tri-service toxicology research consortium."

Brinkley said the biotechnology initiative provides an excellent vehicle to accelerate existing partnerships with local universities and industry.

This project will provide approximately 44,995 square feet of laboratory space for research activities. Several examples of these activities include: pathology, histology, image analysis, kinetics, dermal studies/analytical chemistry, genomics/proteomics, immunohisto-chemistry, combustion toxicology, invitro and molecular, and inhalation and respiratory exposure.

Application of this research includes the development of revolutionary genetically-based analytical systems to provide predictive capabilities to protect our warfighters. These systems



Graphic representation of the toxic hazards effects laboratory, scheduled for completion in 2003. (Air Force image)

will employ knowledge derived from the Human Genome Project to better assist potential dangers in operational areas and to monitor adverse toxic reactions in our military personnel, officials said.

"The Tri-service Toxicology Consortium is truly an internationally recognized Center of Excellence. I expect the strength of their research teams to reap tremendous benefits as we move forward to harness emerging opportunities in biotechnology," Brinkley said.

Messer Construction is the contractor for this project, which is scheduled for completion in Fall 2003. @